



Harbinger

www.graceevanston.org • churchoffice@graceevanston.org

Fall/Winter 2015

**Affirming,
Courageous,
Caring**

**Grace Lutheran
Church of Evanston
1430 South Blvd.
at Wesley
847.475.2211**

**Grace Is An Open
And Affirming RIC
Congregation**

OUR MISSION:

To courageously live out our faith by sharing grace with each other and the communities we serve.

OUR VISION:

All God's people will feel accepted, challenged, and cared for by Grace Church.

**9:00am & 11:00am
Worship Services
Every Sunday**

**Rev. Daniel Ruen
Pastor**

pd@graceevanston.org

**Mark Bowman
Music Director**

**The Rev. Kaari
Reiersen, The Rev.
Jen Rude, and The
Rev. Raquel Rodriguez,
Colleagues in Ministry**

**Marie O'Brien
Parish Administrator**

**Jackson DeLeon-Lopez
Sexton**

A Fall Harvest of 2Ignite

Pastor Daniel

After last year's 2ignite retreats, we chose three primary directions to travel: 1) To grow as a congregation by starting a second service, 2) To leverage our property and facility to greater serve the community and exist as a more ecologically just congregation, and 3) Explore outreach in a new way through an Affiliated Mission Community. All three items are under the umbrella of being an intergenerational, intercultural, and LGBTQ affirming body of Christ.

How are we doing? We started a 9am service in October geared toward outreach and those unchurched or wounded by the church, planning to do a public roll-out of the entire Grace ministry in March of 2016. The 2ignite Service team has been going gangbusters by removing the hedges and replacing them with beautiful flowers and prairie grass, as well as fixing the stone work of the front steps. They developed a master plan for the entire Grace property, are in the process of presenting a new sign, they welcomed a group called 'Alternatives to Violence' that will meet regularly at



Grace, and they are researching ways we can use our property to provide more affordable housing in Evanston. While the Affiliate Mission Community conversations did not lead us to work with the synod and their idea of starting a missionary congregation, Jarrod Gaither and Sarah Carson took the concept and decided to start their own 'Art and Faith' group which invites those who would not otherwise come

to church to talk about God, art and other important issues.

It's a harvest of spirit and action from some very hard work the council and 2ignite planning teams put in over the past couple of years. I am thrilled to see us trying new things, welcoming change that speaks to our values of affirmation, courage, and care, and recognizing that failure is part of learning to be a bolder and more relevant body of Christ.

What's next? A lot. If you haven't already, I encourage you to ask about one of these groups and get involved.

Continued on next page

GRACE ANNUAL BUDGET MEETING DECEMBER 13, 9 - 11:00AM



Advent and Christmas at Grace



Blue Christmas

A cooperative service of reflection and healing

Thursday, Dec. 10 7:30pm at Grace

Las Posadas Service

A Mexican-Christian ritual of walking to different places, just as Mary and Joseph did

Wednesday, Dec. 16 7:00pm at Grace

Children's Pageant & Las Posadas Feast

Sunday Dec. 20 11:00am

Christmas Eve

Thursday, Dec. 24 7:00pm Music; 7:30pm Worship

Christmas Day

Friday, Dec. 25 10:00am Eucharist

The 'garden to table' group will hopefully be starting up next season, utilizing those new garden planters and reaching out to the community. We will publicly roll out the entire Grace ministry in March (online, flyers, signs, community outreach and deeper relationships) to spread the word that there's an active and justice-seeking, grace-loving church in South Evanston. Our Zignite groups will continue trying things, asking God for direction, looking for your prayers and input.

While we reap a fall harvest together in 2015, the cycle of ministry keeps turning. What's next that will need to die? What won't work from the Zignite harvest as we planned? What might be resurrected and made new?

All these things are in the hands of God as we receive the spirit of joy and courage to engage with one another and with the world. I am not afraid. I am thankful, and humbled. I thank all of you for traveling together with such integrity, humor, and faith.

Pastor Daniel

Worship Notes

For Advent the worship team has approved the theme of *Las Posadas*, translated literally as, "The Inns." It is a Mexican-Christian ritual of walking to different places just as Mary and Joseph looked for refuge and were turned away, again and again. Finally, they are allowed into a humble place to give birth to Jesus. A great celebration of welcome and joy follows.

Because of the worldwide refugee, migrant worker, and immigrant crises, Grace will use Las Posadas as an organizing theme that calls us to greater understanding and greater action. We will explore these themes using the Brian McClaren narrative lectionary resource, 'We Make the Road By Walking,' especially as they apply to current affairs. There are current needs of refugees and migrants that we can address and confront during our prayers, worship, and celebrations.

We will not have regular Wednesday Advent services this year. Mark Bowman and I asked the worship team to consider taking a break from them as they have been poorly attended for the past few years, and they agreed. Instead, we will host a cooperative Blue Christmas service on Thursday evening, December 10th, a Las Posadas block walk ritual on Wednesday, December 16th with a worship service at Grace afterwards, and we will look forward to a Las Posadas Christmas Pageant and celebration lunch downstairs in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, December 20th.

Christmas Eve service is on Thursday, December 24th at 7:30pm with special music at 7pm in the Grace Sanctuary, and we'll have Christmas Day Eucharist at 10am on Friday, the 25th. These will all be cooperative services for both the 9am and 11am worshipping communities.

More info will come soon via the Gracenote and Bulletin. I look forward to this season of growing darkness. Not for the sake of darkness, but so that the light of Jesus' love, courage and hope might shine that much brighter in a world of sadness, violence, and need.

Pastor Daniel



What Are You Having For Dinner?

Did you know that 1 out of every 7 persons in Illinois face some days without food? Some go to soup kitchens for a meal and others may visit a food pantry. Grace helps support the food pantry at Uptown Ministry.

Chicago Uptown Ministry serves the homeless, immigrants and low-income families in Chicago's Uptown neighborhood.

Chicago Uptown Ministry's mission is to build community between people from all walks of life and to bring about self-sufficiency, hope and justice. The food pantry serves as a bridge to a number of other services including: ESL classes, after-school programming, AA meetings, support groups for the mentally ill, seniors, parish nursing, substance-abuse treatment referral services and social-justice advocacy.

Grace congregation has supported this ministry for many years. You can help with the food pantry by bringing canned goods to church.

The following are types of items that are most wanted: Meals in a can, like Stew, Spam, Chili with beans and meat, Tuna, Spaghettios, Ravioli with meat, or Macaroni and Cheese Boxes.

Bring your offerings to the box in the west hallway. We'll see to it that they get to Uptown. You will be helping someone or a family be able to answer the question: What's for dinner tonight?"

Connie Wood



Las Posadas

About Grace Fellowship Hall Portable Altar Coffre

I made the altar as a visual encomium, memorial, ex post facto act of fealty, to honor and commemorate my mother Rosina Schwenk Nagelbach and my mother-in-law Alice Kollen Schubert, both of whom died in the summer of 2015.

When the elms of Evanston began to die more than thirty years ago a sawyer set up his head rig not far from Grace Lutheran church and began to make lumber out of the big pile of dead elm trunks the city had piled high in what are now James Park soccer fields. The sawyer sold most of his boards to a bentwood furniture manufacturer in Chicago, but I bought a few hundred board feet and stacked them to air dry. The disease was known as Dutch elm disease; however there are in fact more than thirty species of elms. Amongst the boards I purchased I found rock elm, American elm, slippery or red elm, Chinese elm along with dutch or grey elm. I used my mixed cache of Evanston elm lumber to build the altar. All elm wood is considered hardwood; however the density, color and workability varies significantly from species to species and from board to board. The bottom of the chest is made of very soft white pine boards from the Menomonie Indian Reservation in northern Wisconsin. The Menomonie forest has been managed for over 100 years to benefit seven generations in the future.



A few words about the medallions on the altar: The plates with two fishes and three small loaves of bread were inspired by a similar representation on the sculptor Giselbertus' tympanum at the entrance to the Romanesque cathedral of St. Lazare in Autun, France. Many early representations of the Last Supper included fish along with bread and wine.

On the Schubert side of the altar the medallion is a Luther Rose, a symbol of the reformation dating to 1530. Here is Martin Luther's interpretation of the rose:

"Grace and peace from the Lord. As you desire to know whether my painted seal, which you sent to me, has hit the mark, I shall answer most amiably and tell you my original thoughts and reason about why my seal is a symbol of my theology. The first should



be a black cross in a heart, which retains its natural color, so that I myself would be reminded that faith in the Crucified saves us. "For one who believes from the heart will be justified" (Romans 10:10). Although it is indeed a black cross, which mortifies and which should also cause pain, it leaves the heart in its natural color. It does not corrupt nature; that is, it does not kill but keeps alive. "The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17) but by faith in the crucified. Such a heart should stand in the middle of a white rose, to show that faith gives joy, comfort, and peace. In other words, it places the believer into a white, joyous rose, for this faith does not give peace and joy like the world gives (John 14:27). That is why the rose should be white and not red, for white is the color of the spirits and the angels (cf. Matthew 28:3; John 20:12). Such a rose should stand in a sky-blue field, symbolizing that such joy in spirit and faith is a beginning of the heavenly future joy, which begins already, but is grasped in hope, not yet revealed. And around this field is a golden ring, symbolizing that such blessedness in Heaven lasts forever and has no end. Such blessedness is exquisite, beyond all joy and goods, just as gold is the most valuable, most precious and best metal. This is my compendium theologiae [summary of theology]. I have wanted



to show it to you in good friendship, hoping for your appreciation. May Christ, our beloved Lord, be with your spirit until the life hereafter. Amen."

I have been interested in and worked with the image of a triskellion for some time. The medallion with three entwined fish is a form of triskellion called a triquetra. As a symbol of the trinity this takes various forms from a triangle to interlocked circles. The three interlocked fish are a symbol found in the catacombs of Rome and are most closely associated with early Celtic Christianity.

The scallop shell is a recurrent image in western art (Botticello-Birth of Venus) Here it is a symbol of baptism. John the Baptist is often represented using a scallop shell to baptize Jesus.

And finally the rose blooming and wilted – life, joy, beauty, thorny, temporality.

Fred Nagelbach, November 14, 2015

Summary of October 2015

Accounting for Council and Congregation

Bank balances (on Oct 31)

Reserve	\$1,629.09
General.....	\$5,106.37 (after outstanding checks)
Courage	\$5,337.33 (after outstanding checks)
Capital.....	\$5,245.74
Men's Club	\$1,206.42

Current liabilities (>\$100) excluding mortgage

Interfaith Action	\$ 807.07
Threads of Grace	\$ 244.10
Garden	\$2020.28
Talitha Stark Memorial.....	\$1800.00 (this is targeted at replacing our outdoor sign)
Courageous Giving.....	\$ 432.50
Chairs	\$2951.00

Income and outflows for Oct 2015

Account	Income	Outflow	Net change
General.....	\$20,064.65	\$16,485.69	\$3,578.96
Courageous Giving.....	\$250.43	\$150.00	\$100.43
Capital.....	\$150.00	*\$500.00	\$-(350.00)

*transfer to general fund

Notes:

We still need to send ELCA Metropolitan Synod \$4126 to meet our commitment for this year.

We delayed our Portico benefits payment (\$3930.72) for October into November to ensure that we could cover our bills. If this had been paid in October, we would have run a deficit of \$351.76 for the month.

The council had intended that the Capital Account hold the equivalent of 3 months of mortgage payments. That would be \$5937, so we are about \$700 short of that amount.

At the moment, we cannot pay most of our current liabilities.

As many of you know, we have been receiving money for youth education, with an eye towards buying resources and perhaps hiring someone to guide our program. We have received \$1,875 towards that end. This too, should be considered a liability.

At this time, YOU is planning on moving to a new location during 2016. We currently receive \$1,800 per month in rent. At some time during 2016, we will lose that income.

Comments:

Historically, our generosity has increased in the last two months of the year. Let us reflect on the generosity of God to us, both as we contribute for this year and begin to plan for our budget for 2016.

Ways to contribute automatically:

A number of you have asked about ways to contribute to Grace electronically, so here are several strategies; we may add more over time.

Several of us, including me, use Simply Giving. It is a program in which you can specify amount, frequency, and dates of contributions. It does have the disadvantage of requiring the submission of a new form whenever you want to change. It does require the routing number and account number of your bank account that you want to use. We have the necessary form in the church office and it is attached.



You can also arrange for your bank to make a regular transfer; just speak to a banker there. You would need the Grace church bank account and routing numbers for this strategy. You can speak to me about this. Alternatively, you can have your bank send Grace a check on a regular basis. This approach does not require our account information. Again, there are several members that employ these two strategies.

If you like to give to Courageous Giving or Capital Appeal in addition to the Grace general account, that is just as easily accomplished. They have different account numbers, so you might need that information, but they all have Grace Lutheran Church as the account owner. If sending a check, the bank can put in the memo line which account is your intent.

Russ Kohnken



AUTHORIZATION FORM

The Simply Giving® Program

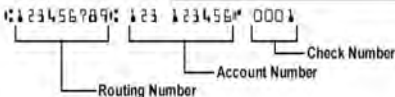
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Lutheran Church of Evanston

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY		ENVELOPE/DONOR #		DATE	
Effective date of authorization: ____/____/____ Type of authorization: <input type="checkbox"/> New authorization <input type="checkbox"/> Change donation amount <input type="checkbox"/> Change donation date <input type="checkbox"/> Change banking information <input type="checkbox"/> Discontinue electronic donation					
Last Name			First Name		
Address					
City				State	Zip
Email Address					
DATE OF FIRST DONATION:		FREQUENCY OF DONATION:		FUNDS:	
____/____/____		<input type="checkbox"/> Weekly – Mondays <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly on the 1 st <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly on the 15 th		<input type="checkbox"/> General/Operating <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	
				AMOUNTS:	
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				\$ _____	
				Total \$ _____	
CHECKING / SAVINGS	Please debit my donation from my (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Savings Account (contact your financial institution for Routing #) <input type="checkbox"/> Checking Account (attach a voided check below)			Routing Number: _____ Valid Routing # must start with 0, 1, 2, or 3 Account Number: _____ 	
	I authorize the above organization to process debit entries to my account. I understand that this authority will remain in effect until I provide reasonable notification to terminate the authorization.				
Authorized Signature: _____					Date: _____

If using a checking account, please attach a voided check at the bottom of this page.

The Lutheran E-newsletter, November 2015

Story by Sarah Carson



What's your story?

At the food pantry where I work, I recently acquired a new office mate. Space is scarce, so we're paired up even though our work has little intersection. Mostly we sit with our backs to one another typing away at our computers. Once a day I try to get to know her better by asking some of life's most important questions:

- **What's your favorite day of the week?** (Saturday, it turns out.)
- **What's your favorite holiday?** (Sukkot.)
- **If your face were a song, what song would it be?** (I never did get an answer to this one)

All of these are variations of another question I've been trying to ask a lot more lately: "What's your story?"

Last spring I tried the question out in an adult Bible study at my church. "What do you think God looks like?" I asked the group. "And how do you think your experiences have made you see God that way?"

The answers were profound. One woman saw God as a sustainer and provider and connected the image with her childhood on a farm. Another man saw God as distant and formidable, much like his father.

The exchange brought us closer together and helped us better understand each other's world.

"This was so easy," I thought, so proud of discovering this new tool for building relationships. "Why didn't we start this long ago?"

Only a few weeks later, though, I discovered just how difficult it could be to ask that same question to those who perhaps need to be asked the most.

One morning I found a neighbor standing in the parking lot, leaning against his cerulean blue Ford Mustang, staring off into the distance. I waited for him to turn so I could make eye contact and say good morning, but he never did. I got in my car and drove to work without saying a word.

That evening I arrived home to find that police officers had blocked off the entrances to my building. My neighbors and I gathered on the sidewalk to make our best guesses as to what had happened. Days later we learned that our neighbor had invited a friend into his home, taken his life, then turned the gun on himself.

For months my neighbor's Mustang remained parked two spots down from my car while his family decided what to do with his belongings. Each day I'd pass it thinking, "What happened? How could you ever reach a point where you'd get so desperate, sad or angry? What did I not know about your life?"

Seeing his car every day—this reminder of what had happened—eventually began to bother me so much that I told a friend I wanted to have it towed. "What if you turned it into something beautiful instead of something tragic?" she asked. "Put a flower on his windshield. Or write him a note."

I decided that night to leave my neighbor a letter: "Michael, I'm sorry that I never got to know you better. I'm sorry I never thought to ask you about your story. I wish I could have told you that I have also felt sad, desperate and angry. If there's something I could have said that morning that would have made a difference, I'm sorry I didn't say it. I hope you've found peace."

God challenges us to know and love our neighbors. Who is God calling you to reach out to today?

http://www.thelutheran.org/article/article.cfm?article_id=12847



Fra Angelico (Florentine painter, c. 1400-1455), "The Annunciation" (c. 1437), Fresco, Monastery of San Marco, Florence.

Mission Group Thank-You Notes

Recently, a mission group from All Saints Lutheran in Minnesota stayed at Grace. This group has stayed here many times, when they come to Chicago to do work at Holy Family.

Attached is a note from some of the visitors:

We sincerely appreciate your
continued friendship and support.
May God richly bless you and your
flock. *Kay Scholten*

Thanks again for your
hospitality. It's such a wonderful
place to come and stay!
God Bless, *Bernie Johnson*

Dear Pastor Dan & Grace
Congregation,

Thanks again for your
hospitality & support of our
mission. The quilts we brought
are a gift from All Saints
quilters. Please use them as
you see fit.

*All Saints Lutheran
of Minnetonka
Chicago Mission Team*

Thanks again for your support of
our mission trip to Holy Family. Maybe
next year it can include some members
from Grace *John Clark*



Pieter Bruegel the Elder, *The Hunters in the Snow*, 1565. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. The most famous of Bruegel's several winter landscapes, the panel is indicative of how painting in the mid-16th century tended towards the secular and everyday life.

FOR UNTO US
a child is born,
unto us a son is given:
and the government shall be upon his shoulder:
and his name shall be called
★ **WONDERFUL** ★
COUNSELLOR,
THE MIGHTY GOD,
The everlasting Father,
THE PRINCE OF PEACE.
Isaiah 9:6



Grace

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